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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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PAUL TILlich : ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN PROTESTANTISM AND MARXISM

Ronald H. STONE

RÉSUMÉ. — Cet essai relève les traces du dialogue constant entre protestantisme et marxisme, qui a marqué la pensée de Paul Tillich. L'article considère d'abord la rupture vécue par Tillich au cours de la Première Guerre mondiale, avec son engagement subséquent dans le socialisme révolutionnaire, pour parler ensuite de son rejet des armes nucléaires. Les premiers écrits socialistes furent influencés par Max Weber. Son principal ouvrage socialiste était dirigé contre le nazisme et pour une acceptation mutuelle du socialisme et de la religion. Entre le protestantisme luthérien et le marxisme, il y a convergence et divergence quant à la compréhension de l'humanité, et ils ont chacun quelque chose à apprendre de l'autre. Malgré l'influence dominante des catégories protestantes dans son œuvre postérieure, il demeure redevable à l'humanisme marxiste. C'est ainsi qu'il a élaboré des intuitions toujours valables dans l'ordre de l'éthique politique, et qu'il s'est refusé à devenir captif de l'idéologie américaine de la guerre froide.

SUMMARY. — The essay traces the life-long internal dialogue between Protestantism and Marxism that shaped the thought of Paul Tillich. The paper moves from Tillich's World War I experiences of brokenness and turn to revolutionary socialism to his post-World War II rejection of the nuclear weapons of war. Even the early socialist writings of Paul Tillich were influenced by Max Weber. His major socialist work was directed against Nazism and for the mutual acceptance of socialism and religion. The understanding of humanity reflected both the convergence and divergence of Lutheran Protestantism and Marxism and they needed to learn from each other. With the dominance of Protestant categories over Marxist categories in his later work, he remained indebted to Marxist humanism and he developed insights into political ethics of enduring worth and refused to become captive to American cold-war ideology.

THE SEARCH for an adequate understanding of the relationship of Marxism to Christianity characterizes many open conflicts today and is a motif of the issues of economic development, revolutionary war, the cold-war arms race, and turmoil in Soviet dominated nations. Paul Tillich worked on the issues of dialogue between religion and Marxism for almost half a century. Our wrestling with these issues can benefit from his struggle with the issues. Because the length of this paper is less than the length of several of his papers on the subject not to mention two important books on the subject, it will be anticipated that the author will note only a few aspects of the subject that have caught his interest¹. The topic would more adequately be covered in a book. This paper deliberately omits references to the philosophy of history and key concepts like class conflict, Kairos, theonomy, autonomy, and heteronomy.

CULTURAL ARTIFACTS

As a young boy, it became necessary at my grandfather's death to clean out the family home. In the attic we found a German helmet from World War I, the crest said *For Fatherland with God and King*. The helmet had been picked up on the Western front, its loss had probably cost some German-Christian soldier his head. I often remembered that helmet when I was working in the Tillich paper in the Harvard Archives.

Tillich had left his boyhood home of dreaming innocence, his pastoral work in Berlin, and his patriarchal home with everything in place to go to war. He had his Ph.D. in theology, he was married, his family represented the learned German clergy. His father had served as chaplain to the Emperor on a trip to Jerusalem. It was a world of patriarchal capitalism, with the empire and Lutheranism in a symbiotic relationship. He went to war in a seige of patriotism and without clear political convictions.

By the end of the war he had suffered nervous collapses repeatedly, he had helped bury the cream of the German office corps, his wife had become pregnant by his friend, and the empire had been defeated and thrown into revolution.

His first course in Berlin, "Christianity and the Social Problems of the Present", indicated the new social passions of the young Privatdozent. There are two cultural artifacts from this period in the Harvard Archives. The *first* is a flyer calling for a meeting to organize a new church. The program was summarized in four points:

- 1) renew religious motifs in culture,
- 2) support the new republic and socialism,
- 3) align the church with the international peace movement,
- 4) institute parliamentary control of the church.

The second is a red poster with a hammer and sickle symbol announcing that Paul Tillich will speak to a rally of Independent Social Democrats. Pastors Richard

1. The general ideas of Paul Tillich on religious socialism and Marxism are covered in many studies and I did not want to repeat the work of my *Paul Tillich's Radical Social Thought* (Atlanta, John Knox Press, 1980) or other essays, so I have chosen selectively some areas of recent interest.

Wegener and Paul Tillich were called upon to justify their participation in the ISD rally. They wrote a paper for the Brandenburg consistory justifying their position. They argued:

- 1) The personal encounter of the person and God is beyond any economic or social form,
- 2) Christianity is inevitably involved with society,
- 3) Christianity has greater affinity with socialism than with capitalism,
- 4) Socialism had no essential fight with Christianity.

The reaction of the church hierarchy was hostile and they were ordered not to speak at any more ISD rallies.

His socialism alienated him from the church of his father, but the socialism developed in small religious discussion groups. He understood his form of religious socialism not to be a movement for the whole church, but to be a small non-political movement which would reflect the development of the ideas rooted in social reality. Even as he led in various discussion circles he learned from others and depended on others for political-economic concepts. The groups lived on the boundary between socialism and religion.

Paul Tillich's special place on the boundary was the engagement of the early Karl Marx with Lutheranism. He could not stand the tendencies toward legalism and Biblicism that he found in Calvinism, the economics of *Das Kapital* and the determinist-scientific Marxist writers held little interest for him. But a trained economist with a passion for analyzing Calvinism influenced his methodological approach to the encounter with Marxist critique of bourgeois society.

THE USE OF MAX WEBER

Max Weber haunts the socialist writing of Paul Tillich. Basic concepts are taken over, utilized, and usually not acknowledged. I want to suggest that the importance of this is that Paul Tillich had already integrated Max Weber into his socialism by an early date. At least by 1926 the socialist presentation of Tillich was shaped by Weber. Weber had reshaped his own writing on religion and economics during the first World War, so the work was relatively fresh.

The central concept of *The Religious Situation* published in 1926 is "The Capitalist Spirit". It does not differ from Weber's concept "The Spirit of Capitalism". The explanation of the use of term makes use of Weber's ideal type methodology. Tillich writes: "It is rather a symbol for an ultimate, fundamental attitude toward the world"². The purpose of the book is to show that the dominance of the spirit of capitalism is receiving significant challenges.

The economic organization of modernity arose on grounds of autonomy and the overthrow of superior powers. The economic influence dominates the selves that

2. PAUL TILlich, *The Religious Situation*, Translated by H.R. Niebuhr. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1932, p. xxv.

develop within the system. "The spirit of a finitude which lives within itself is, for our time, the spirit of capitalist society"³. The awe and mystery of the world have been replaced by control of finite reality by humanity. Personality is freed from mystery and pressed into the bondage of living within a system of rational, calculating manipulation of reality. The economic function comes to control life.

This is one of the weightiest characteristics of the capitalist time. The good of unlimited desire does not allow the spirit time for anything which does not serve time itself. It drives the spirit about within the inescapable and unending circle of the finite⁴.

The personality of the early 20th century humanity is portrayed by Tillich as living in Max Weber's iron cage.

In 1926, Tillich had moved beyond the early romantic socialism of revolutionary enthusiasm. The book did not show the full movement into and transformation of socialist categories that the 1932 work *The Socialist Decision* would exhibit. The 1926 study is more a critique of the culture while hoping for a religious change, by 1932 he is proposing a program for changing society and calling for socialist change.

The book showed how completely sectarian Christianity and Calvinism had merged in North America with capitalism. They reinforced each other in a way which appeared impregnable to Tillich. Neither Catholicism or Lutheranism revealed a social program fit to the crisis. In Prophetic critique and pre-Capitalist Catholic religiosity he saw some hope for a religious orientation against the capitalist spirit of "the ideal of a self-sufficient finitude"⁵. He sees protestantism bereft of an independent culture, so the resistance to capitalism will come from its greatest source of strength, its theological work. Still *The Religious Situation* is basically an analysis of the way things are and from whence they have come and it does not show the goals or power of transformation.

A few years later he explicitly referred to his use of these broad concepts as ideal types. The proletariat was described as a class dependent upon the sale of their labor under market conditions. He said the concept was not entirely an empirical concept but a representative or typological one⁶.

The next year he used the term *principal* "to refer to the summarizing characterization of a political group"⁷. *Principal* was a way to avoid the endless empirical particularities and to refer to dynamics of a movement or to its spirit. It also emphasized the decision or existentialist character of identifying a group with its central powerful idea. So with the term *principal* he can carry forward the typological, descriptive-critical work of *The Socialist Decision*.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

6. See: *Political Expectation*, ed. by James Luther Adams. New York, Harper and Row, 1971.

7. *The Socialist Decision*. Washington, University Press of America and Harper and Row, 1977, p. 9.

The utilization of Weber's method to describe Marxist ideas began to transform Marxism. Religion could never be only a byproduct of the substructure of the society.

Economic materialism as taught by some Marxists is excluded by method from the system. Metaphysical materialism is overthrown by a descriptive method forged to demonstrate the relative significance of religious-intellectual phenomena. Historical materialism remains a possibility and over against an historical idealism, Tillich affirms materialism but most of this affirmation is making use of unacknowledged Weberian ideal types. Furthermore, Marxism is a term used to describe the growing self-realization of the proletariat in overcoming their alienated situation. This equation of Marxism with this growing consciousness meant it was not primarily an idea, but the power of a movement. It also meant that if the power faded so did Marxism.

THE SOCIALIST DECISION

In 1929 when he joined the Social Democratic Party, it was to strengthen the party now out of power for a return to power to oppose groups bearing other ideas. He tried to join religion and social democracy calling on both religion and social democracy to reform. Their separation and antagonism reflected the human estrangement. Their union would have given the possibility of a theonomous political movement.

The ideas of reform, planning, criticism of social democracy were reinforced by ideas within protestantism. Protestantism's reform and critique needed to be reinforced by myths of origin or catholicity while socialism needed the principle of expectation which could be best grasped in religious terms. But not enough Socialists nor enough Christians could be persuaded to join both these historically antagonistic movements. He tried to unite conceptually those which historically were opposed. *The Socialist Decision* of 1933 ended up quickly banned by Hitler, later bombed by the U.S.A. in the warehouse, and its synthesis of transformed socialism and socialized protestantism awaited the future.

The Socialist Decision is his most creative political philosophy. It was written under pressure. He was warned by Max Horkheimer that certain sentences in the manuscript could cost him his life. Two months after its publication he was suspended from his university position in Frankfurt. But it was not only inspired by the pressure, he had a program: the reform of socialism so that it could resist Nazism.

The volume expresses his deeply speculative mind as it organizes the fruit of fourteen years of socialist conversations and previous lectures. It also represents Tillich the fighter, who fought as a philosopher could best fight by criticizing Nazi claims to truth, by explaining, criticizing, and relativizing Nazi thought. The hope for the success of his program rested in the variable of moving revolutionary support away from the political romanticism of Nazism to the critical politics of social democracy.

The introduction to the volume of two types of political philosophy was translated and published in English in the *Interpretation of History*, the remainder of

the volume awaited Franklin Sherman's publication of a translation in 1977. The two types are those founded in myths of origin and those originating in prophetic criticism of those myths. Other political movements bearing political ideas can be analyzed fruitfully in terms of expansions of these concepts. Hence Nazism is analyzed as a revolutionary form of political romanticism as it attacks the present in terms of a radical reading of myths of origin, i.e., blood, soil, nation. The spirit of Judaism rooted in prophetic criticism of nature religions and divine-human hierarchies rooted in the cycle of nature is essentially opposed to political romanticism.

Other sections of the book move beyond the analysis of political romanticism to analyze Western capitalism as akin to Western socialism in sharing the critique of the myths of origin. Western capitalism's progressivism depended upon the myth of harmony, i.e., "the invisible hand" of Adam Smith and that myth too is dissolved in socialist criticism.

Socialism in its turn is criticized in several areas of its unresolved problems as socialist hopes seemed to outrun socialist possibilities. Socialism reflected the powers of origin in the realities of the anguish of its proletarian population, it criticized and shattered the belief in harmony, and it demanded change. The demand for change remained heteronomous without the concept of *expectation*. Expectation, the worldly eschatology of prophetic religion is necessary if the tensions of socialism are to be resolved. It is the prophetic expectation that the *new* can emerge. Expectation indicates that the demands of ethics of critical consciousness are supported by the powers of origin. Hence there is hope. There may be chaos and barbarism, but the powers of change reflect the powers of origin so they can be trusted. The religious roots of socialism are seen in this concept of expectation. Despite his valiant tries in the volume to avoid utopianism, the sense of expectation that religious people and socialists could allie in 1933 in a theonomous political movement seems utopian. He saw the possibility of defeat and he could predict and he did predict barbarism, war, and chaos if political romanticism prevailed.

Shortly before the Nazi electoral victories he had a dream of sheep grazing in the deserted yards of the center of government in Berlin's Potsdammer Platz. After the war he saw in a New York newspaper a picture of sheep grazing in Potsdammer Platz. It is only a short walk from the still deserted, boarded up buildings of the "Thousand Year Reich" to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. Here the ruined remains of imperial Germany are united in their bombed-out form with the new church structure. I like to think that this was the church where in 1933 Hannah had to restrain Paul's curses and obscene gestures when they exited from a Nazi-dominated church meeting. Cursing the sick culture and prostituted church of Germany in 1933 was appropriate. Heinrich Heine, a Jew, prophesized correctly the cathedrals were doomed.

Christianity — and this is its fairest merit — subdued to a certain extent the brutal warrior ardour of the Germans but it could not entirely quench it; and when the cross, that restraining talisman, falls to pieces, then will break forth again the ferocity of the old combatants, the frantic Berserker rage whereof Northern poets have said and sung so much. The talisman has become rotten, and the day will come when it will pitifully crumble to dust. The old stone gods will arise then from

the forgotten ruins and wipe from their eyes the dust of centuries, and Thor with his giant hammer will arise again, and he will shatter the Gothic cathedrals...⁸.

CONCEPT OF HUMANITY

In 1935, Tillich wrote a report on "The Christian and the Marxist View of Man" for the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work Research Department⁹. It continues the anthropological explorations that were present in *The Socialist Decision* and makes the analogies between his protestantism and Marxism quite clear. Part of the report is still in outline form and many of the sources of Tillich's thought are referred to only by name and their specific contributions left undeveloped. A second edition of the paper was developed in 1959 and that is the version of the paper that is extant in the Harvard Archive. The report is complete enough to be a prospectus for a major study, perhaps a small book. It is not surprising that he was still engaged at a deep level with Marxism in 1959. He continued publishing on Marxism in the United States through the 30's, 40's, and 50's and in Germany and Japan in 1960. The evidence of the works of Tillich is contrary to the assertion by Weisskopf in *The Thought of Paul Tillich* that "Tillich's socialist writings stem from the time before his emigration to the U.S. and therefore does not cover events after 1933"¹⁰. The report, outline, prospectus or whatever it is is a reminder that the life-long, primary-dialogue partner to Paul Tillich's protestantism was Marxism. John Stumme has dated the origins of this dialogue of his work in "Inner Mission" and Church apologetics to the proletariat which led to a debate on December 12, 1913 with Karl Liebknecht who later organized the German Communist Party¹¹.

The first section of the paper shows that neither Marxism nor some tendencies in Protestantism have an "articulate anthropology". Their refusal to articulate anthropology in both cases was rooted in their negative evaluation of historical existence. However within both Protestantism and Marxism developments have developed anthropologies which try to unite radically critical attitudes with anthropology capable of supporting hope for healing. Their convergent trends reveal their common prophetic heritage and make comparisons possible.

The second section of the paper is an outline form presentation of the basic ideas of Protestant anthropology. The result of the presentation is to show that there are :

seven problems of equal importance to Christianity and Marxism : Humanity's original true nature, the transition to a state of contradiction, the character of this contradiction, existence in contradiction, the overcoming of the contradiction, the goal of the perfection of humanity¹².

8. Quoted in Beate von Oppen, *Religion and Resistance to Nazism*. Princeton, Princeton University Center of International Studies, 1971, p. 9.

9. TILlich, "The Christian and the Marxist View of Man", Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, Harvard Archive, 1935, Second Edition, 1959.

10. James L. ADAMS, Wilhelm PAUCK, Roger L. SHINN (eds), *The Thought of Paul Tillich*. San Francisco, Harper and Row Publishers, 1985, p. 76.

11. John R. STUMME, *Socialism in Theological Perspective*. Missoula, Scholars Press, 1978, p. 55.

12. TILlich, "The Christian and the Marxist View of Man", p. 5.

The exploration of the seven problems in the third section demonstrates that there are structural analogies between prophetic Christianity and Marxism especially in its original form in Marx himself. He does not intend to argue for identity of ideas but to show typologically certain analogies. As the second section had begun "The galvanizing point of view of Christian-Protestant anthropology is the relation of man to God"¹³, the third section begins: "The controlling viewpoint of all socialist-Marxist anthropology is man's position within society"¹⁴. Then the analogies in the seven areas are presented.

The fourth and final section of the paper shows the contradictions between Christianity and Marxism in the areas where structural analogies were found. In each case the fundamental antithesis is one of immanence and transcendence. Christian anthropology is related to God and Marxist anthropology to society. All of the fundamental oppositions can be seen to be an expression of the transcendence-immanence issue.

Marxism is seen as adopting one element that of the critical-prophetic motif while Christianity also preserves the possibilities of mysticism and a certain inward existence distinct from social contradictions. Conditions of the relationship between Marxism and Christianity depend on whether the relationship is exclusive or particular; the first possibility of interpretation leads to life-and-death struggle. The second interpretation which was that of religious socialism would understand Marxism as the critical-prophetic-immanent tendency of Christianity's own life. Such an interpretation which was Tillich's own would then regard it as the task of the church to "search for a way of receiving it again into itself".

This tightly outlined and argued paper then ends with this plea for reunion of the separated, and the return of the prophetic elements to their religious roots.

NEAR THE END

The existentialist's notes become louder in his 1960 essay "On the Boundary" published for *The Christian Century* in the "How My Mind Has Changed". He admits the reasons for his lessened political interest¹⁵. It was a time of prevailing trends and not of decisive actions. Political decisions were confined to small power groups which excluded wide general influence on significant decisions. The neurotic conditions of the world were seen in neurotic individuals. As a German-born American it wasn't a time for his own expressions of German religious-socialism. He did not really understand American politics, etc. But then as always his work was in response to requests, Harvard asked him to lecture on German philosophy and on religion and culture. Not many were asking for fresh work on religious socialism in the United States. Tillich of course was never a pure existentialist. Those years at Harvard saw the

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

15. *Id.*, *The Christian Century* LXXVII (December 7, 1960), pp. 1435-37.

essentialism emphasized in Volume III and in the Harvard courses. However, the existentialism appeared in the focus on the individual.

Here the Lutheranism emerges dominant. He had always known of the more radical place for the individual in Christian faith, but in these final years it becomes dominant in his preaching and particularly in his emphasis on psychology and mental health. In 1935 he had written:

The transcendental foundation offers Christianity the possibility of disassociating to a certain existence the inward existence of the individual from among the structural framework of the objective contradiction. This is the ground of the possibility of the care of individual souls and of mysticism within Christianity. In Marxism, however, such a disengagement of the interior existence of the individual is made impossible by the purely social interpretation of the contradiction¹⁶.

By 1960 this possibility of the care of individual souls had become dominant in his own work. He now tended to lecture on religion and society and not often on religious socialism. He rooted his social action in fighting the demonic not in the expectation of victory in society.

John Stumme has summarized the approach of his closing years well. "There was for him no going 'beyond religious socialism'"¹⁷. Religious socialism had been his venture from the end of World War I to the end of World War II; pragmatic, reform politics were in order after World War II. The church had to wait passionately and actively for signs of a new theonomy. The doctrine of the *Kairos* even if sometimes romantic had always meant there were periods without the *Kairos*.

During the Spring quarter of 1962-63 at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, Tillich made a remark in his lectures on the history of Christian thought that is a clue as to the importance of Karl Marx for his thought. The remark needs to be taken seriously as a clue to the importance of Marx for his ongoing thought.

What I will do now is perhaps surprising to you. I want to give you here the theology of the most successful of all theologians since the Reformation, namely, Karl Marx. I will consider him as a theologian. And I will show you that without doing this, it is impossible to understand the history of the twentieth century and large sections of the late nineteenth century. If you consider him only as a political leader or as a great economist, which he also was, or as a great sociologist, which he was even more, then you cannot understand from what sources the power came which transformed the whole world and conquered nearly half of it in the twentieth century¹⁸.

16. ID., "The Christian and the Marxist View of Man" (December, 1935), p. 16. (Mimeographed copy Harvard Archives).

17. STUMME, *Socialism in Theological Perspective*, p. 255.

18. TILlich, *A History of Christian Thought*, ed. by Carl E. Bratten. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1968, p. 476.

ETHICS AND POLITICS

Appropriate political action always accounts for the cultural possibilities. To act without recognizing the culture limits is utopian. Politics for Tillich, however, is not just adjusting to culture, it may mean opposition to the dominant culture. The drive to oppose culture arises from ethics and the ability to discern possibilities for change.

Ethics is the understanding of practical activity toward the realization of the unconditioned. Ethics won't realize the ideal community, but by expressing action guides in transcendent symbols it affects the community's action.

Despite the complexity of the biographical formulation of Tillich's ethic and the wide range of sources from which it is drawn, the form of this ethic is clear and consistent.

The structure is threefold : First, the ultimate principle of Christian ethics is *agape* which is known as the law of human nature ; Second, human wisdom is represented in laws, moral principles, guidelines ; Third, the concrete situation in which the actor takes upon himself the risk of moral decision. This pattern of love, law, and situation is present in most of Tillich's writing on ethics.

Agape is the one universal element of the human moral situation. Occasionally, he describes the universal element as "the human itself". The seeming ambivalence in his ethics, of course, derives from his claim that a properly conducted analysis of human nature reveals love as the essence of life. Though in much of his writing it would rather seem that the experience of love is the starting point of the analysis : "In man's experience of love the nature of life becomes manifest"¹⁹.

The second level of the theory accepts the relativity of all moral principles unless they are alternative formulations of *agape* which in itself includes justice and the honoring of a person as a person. Moral principles or middle axioms are not despised, but they are thoroughly relativized. They are useful as guidelines. If they are embodied *agape* and if they meet the situation, they are that which the moral decision maker acts upon.

The third level, that of the situation, requires loving listening. It is at this level that the tools of the social and psychological sciences have their most importance for Tillich. His anti-moralism demands that as many of the particulars of the situation be understood as possible. There is no security, but only the risk of moral decision and the comfort that trust in the power of forgiveness gives.

Love as the absolute is the principle of justice which keeps it creative. Justice forms the society in a relationship which allows development of human beings in community. Being under conditions of human life can express itself in a form encouraging unity and growth.

It seemed to Tillich in 1919 that religious socialism expressed the absolute, was appropriate to the principles of human wisdom, and was the decision to be made. I think that by 1932 religious socialism was a less direct expression of the absolute, but it

19. *Id.*, *Love, Power and Justice*, p. 25.

was still an appropriate action to be taken even at the risk of career and life as it expressed the best human option. By 1965 it seems that religious socialism was no longer an expression of the absolute for many societies, it was still the best human option available, and it could not find a place in the American soil to flourish.

One more example of ethics leading against the cultural movement is seen in his opposition to the increased development of nuclear weapons. He called for resistance to the drift toward human self-destruction.

The correspondence in the Harvard Archive indicates that Tillich was repeatedly requested by the American Friends Service Committee, the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, and other organizations to endorse their positions against weapons testing for nuclear disarmament. He refused to give any of the organizations whole-hearted support, he especially resisted their pacifist leanings. He did sign a statement of the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy in 1957 calling for arms control and the abolition of nuclear testing. The statement was published in the *New York Times* on November 15, 1957. Other signatures included longstanding pacifists, anti-war activists, religious leaders, Eleanor Roosevelt, and John Bennet whose guidance Tillich sought on these questions. Reinhold Niebuhr who was a little more of a cold warrior than John Bennet refrained from signing, though on most issues Bennett, Niebuhr, and Tillich were agreed.

Tillich's Harvard secretary, Grace Leonard, was a member of SANE, and through her influence Tillich agreed to SANE's 1961 use of a statement he had published in the *Pulpit Digest* on the dangers of the hydrogen bomb. The statement summarizes his general philosophical position on the threat of nuclear weapons well.

The increasingly and apparently unlimited power of the means of self-destruction in the hands of men puts before us the question of the ultimate meaning of this development.

The first point which comes to my mind is the possibility that it is the destiny of historical man to be annihilated not by a cosmic event but by the tensions in his own being and in his own history.

The reaction to this possibility — this is the second point — should be the certainty that the meaning of human history, as well as of everyone's life within it, is not dependent on the time or the way in which history comes to an end. For the meaning of history lies above history.

The third point is that everyone who is aware of the possibility of mankind's self-destruction must resist this possibility to the utmost. For life and history have an eternal dimension and are worthy to be defended against man's suicidal instincts which are socially as real as individually.

The fourth point is that the resistance against the suicidal instincts of the human race must be done on all levels, on the political level through negotiations between those who in a tragic involvement force each other into the production of ever stronger means of self-destruction; on the moral level through a reduction of propaganda and an increase in obedience to the truth about oneself and the potential enemy; on the religious level through a sacred serenity and superiority over the preliminary concerns of life, and a new experience and a new expression of the ultimate concern which transcends as well as determines man's historical existence.

The fifth point is that the resistance against the self-destructive consequences of man's technical control of nature must be done in acts which unite the religious, moral, and political concern, and which are performed in imaginative wisdom and courage.

I would stress his calling for resistance to the self-destructive aspects of human nature's expression in nuclear weapons. Still, he had no utopian expectations of absolute justice or total peace. But there were grounds for hope for a precarious peace in (1) the fear of mutual destruction, (2) the conquest of space, (3) inter-cultural cooperation, (On this point, I would emphasize a theme I find in his trip to Japan which was absent from his doctoral dissertation discussion of world religions in Schelling: his engagement in dialogue with Zen masters and others about the culturally impaired limits on democratic development in Japan. This inquiry into the relationship of culture hence religion to politics was missing from his pre-World War I work.) (4) evolving legal structures, and (5) some signs of developing communal eros. So there were grounds for hope rooted in historical developments²⁰.

Some of us in academia and the church are more responsible for the shape of the culture than we are for politics. We can do things in culture that politicians cannot yet do and retain power. We can attack the hatefilled anti-communism which poisons our culture. We can attack and create alternative programming to the mass nonsense that deadens the minds of our American T.V. citizens. We can demand that Christianity be intelligible and that ministers be intelligent. We can attack the one-sided individualism which thwarts planning in society and social responsibility in church. We can practice and advocate resistance to militarism. Politicians sensing the restraints of our poisoned culture must necessarily move more slowly, but if we move they can move. In a Tillichian sense of expectation we can hold up a vision of humanity transforming itself as it learns to educate itself, feed itself fairly, plan for welfare rather than compete for greed, accept a political-cultural pluralism, engage world religious systems in dialogue rather than terror, and venture out of a star-wars mentality into a star-trek dream. In our hopes we can participate in a theonomous struggle toward a dynamic just-peace.

20. ID., "Address at Pacem In Terris Convocation in New York City" (February 18, 1965), pp. 8-10.